



THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION of VICTORIA

(A member of the Co-operative Federation of Australia)

REPORT

For year ended June 30th, 1982

THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA
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THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

Report

for

year ended 30th June 1982

Significant events:

- New Co-operation Act passed through Parliament
- New Company legislation incorporating special provisions for Co-operative Companies passed through Parliament
- Legislation introduced into the Parliament to transfer administration of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act to the Minister administering the Co-operation Act.
- Legislation provides for incorporation of the Co-operative Federation comprising Co-operative Company and Co-operative Society members
- Ruling obtained to allow bonus or rebate based on business done by members with Co-operative Societies to be paid wholly or partly in the form of bonus shares or bonus debentures
- Removal of exemption from payment of stamp duties on cheques issued by credit unions and building societies competing directly with the banking system
- Two Federation nominees appointed by Minister to Co-operative Societies Advisory Council
- Three Federation nominees appointed to Ministry of Employment and Training Co-operative Development Programme Funding Committee
- Employment Co-operatives Business Advisory United established
- Establishment of Co-operatives and teaching of Co-operation in schools programme developing

THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA

Report for year ended June 30th 1982

1. INTRODUCTION

The year just concluded has been of great significance for Co-operatives and the Federation in that, during this period, new Co-operative Society legislation was enacted in the State Parliament. The Companies (Victoria) Code relating to formation and regulation of companies in Victoria, containing the special sections for Co-operative Companies unique to the State, was also passed into law. Legislation to transfer the Industrial and Provident Societies Act Administration to the administration of the Registrar of Co-operative Societies was introduced into Parliament.

The State Government election in April 1982 gave Victoria a Government new to their task. Your Federation has been active in developing relations with relevant Ministers. Membership of the Federation has continued to increase in recognition of its vital role as the sole organisation representing the wide range of existing co-operatives in relations with Government and public, development of programmes to assist Co-operatives and promotion of the Co-operative structure and philosophy in business and the community.

2. COUNCIL

Mr. Niel Black presided over the Federation and was Chairman of the Council throughout the year under review. Council met ten times during the year to discuss general Federation affairs plus a further weekend meeting specifically related to corporate planning.

During the year two Councillors resigned. Mr. Plant resigned on leaving the services of the Co-operative member of the Federation and was replaced by Mr. Jack Mitchell. Mr. Foster retired and his position was vacant at the end of the financial year.

At the close of the year the Council and Office Bearers comprised

Office	Name	Type of Councillor
President	Mr. J.N. Black	Producer Industry
Vice President	Mr. G.J. Statters	General
Councillors	Mr. A. Dash	Credit Industry
	Mr. A. Gill	General
	Mr. E.J. Long	General
	Mr. B.H. Macdonald	Trading Industry
	Mr. J. Mitchell	General
	Mr. M. Rundle	General
	Mr. G.J. Stammers	General
	Mr. J.F. Rigby	
Hon. Treasurer	Mr. W.W. Rawlinson	
Executive Officer		
Auditors	Thompson Douglass & Co.	

3. FINANCIAL

The agreement with the Co-operative Federation of Australia whereby joint use is made of secretariat facilities and the services of the Executive Officer on a contributing cost basis continued throughout the year. In an endeavour to meet the increasing costs of operation, membership subscriptions were raised by 10% for the financial year under review. Arrears of the subscriptions due at the beginning of the year were paid during the year. At the end of the financial year one outstanding subscription only remained unpaid from the current year's dues.

The agreement between the Federation and the Ministry of Employment and Training continued throughout the year to enable the Co-operative Federation to participate fully in the Government of Victoria's Community Employment Co-operatives Development Programme. This has enabled a senior appointment of advisor to these community employment co-operatives plus an administrative assistant to be made to the staff of the Federation.

By prudent control of expenditure and provision of services outside the Federation main activities, the year's operation has resulted in a financial surplus of income over expenditure. However, the costs of the Executive Officer, an employee of the Co-operative Federation of Australia, are subsidised by that Federation.

Copies of the Financial Statements are issued to members and are available for other interested parties on request.

4. PERSONNEL

In the New Year's Day Honours List Mr. N. McArthur, German Australian Footwear Retailers Co-operative, was awarded the O.B.E.

During the year two nominees of the Federation were appointed by the Minister administering the Co-operation Act 1981 to the Co-operative Societies Advisory Council. They are:

Mr. E.J. Long
Mr. W.W. Rawlinson

Three nominees of the Federation were appointed by the Minister for Employment and Training to that Department's Funding Committee established to consider applications for funding from participants in the Government's Community Employment Co-operative Development programme.

They are:

Mr. D. Webster
Mr. A. Gill
Mr. W.W. Rawlinson

The staff of the Federation in addition to the Executive Officer, seconded from the Co-operative Federation of Australia, comprised at the end of the year:

Mr. Brian Greer	Advisor, Community Employment Co-operatives
Mrs. Joanne Sarlin	Administrative Assistant to the Adviser
	and
Mrs. Anne Loban	Office Manager/Secretary

5. MEMBERSHIP

Twenty two Co-operatives applied for and were admitted into membership of the Federation during the year. Three former member Co-operatives terminated membership due to their cessation of trading as Co-operatives and disposal of their assets.

Present membership represents about 25% of producer and trading co-operatives incorporated in Victoria. Credit Co-operatives of which there are 207 in Victoria associate with the Federation through the Victorian Credit Co-operative Association.

6. MEMBER RELATIONS

A well attended and informative conference held in the early part of the current financial year combined with the Annual General Meeting of the Federation enabled a wide cross-section of members to exchange experiences and meet together in a relaxed social atmosphere.

In addition to the Annual Report two newsletters have been published by the Federation during the current year. Professional services have been engaged to provide a new look for the newsletter which appears to be well accepted.

Through funds provided by the Ministry of Employment and Training a newsletter entitled "Co-operative Review" has been published on behalf of the Community Employment Co-operatives in the State. At the end of the financial year the arrangements for preparation and publication of this "Co-operative Review" were transferred from the Co-operative Federation to the Education Unit of the Co-operative Development Programme housed in the Vocational Orientation Centre.

In the latter part of the year regional meetings were held in the Gippsland region and Western Districts. Both were well attended and proved useful exchange of information exercises.

In addition a meeting of managers of Trading Co-operatives was held in Melbourne which, as well as exchanging information of common needs, enabled the trading managers to meet with an official of the International Labour Organisation responsible for development of Co-operative trade with Co-operatives in Asian, Pacific developing countries.

7. LEGISLATION

7.1 Co-operative Companies

As indicated by the State Attorney General in response to submissions by the Federation the new Companies (Victoria) Code replacing the 1961 Companies Act incorporates the provisions specifically related to Co-operatives contained in the former Act.

Section, Companies Act 1961	Sections Relating To	Sections Companies (Victoria) Code
Section 5 (1)	Definition of a Co-operative Company.	Section 5 (1)
Section 17 (7)	Membership of a Co-operative Holding Company.	Section 36 (8)
Section 374 (14)	Restriction on offering shares etc. for subscription or purchase	Section 552 (17)

7.2. Co-operative Societies

The passage of the Co-operation Act 1981 was a valuable exercise in co-operation between Government and interested bodies. The fullest consultation occurred to ensure that the wishes of Co-operatives were heard and in many cases incorporated into the revised legislation. The time factor before the Bill's final submission to Parliament was insufficient to enable all requested inclusions to be written into the legislation. However the current Minister administering the Co-operation Act has established a Legislative Review Committee and submissions are invited through the Co-operative Federation on matters not covered in the new Co-operation Act which member Co-operatives consider should be included.

One section of the Act enables the Co-operative Federation of Victoria to apply for incorporation under that Act. Action is being taken for the convening of a formation meeting with a view to formal application for incorporation as a Federation with limited liability.

As a result of submissions from the Federation, the Co-operative Societies Advisory Council has formally ruled that the part of surplus arising from the business of Co-operatives incorporated under the Co-operation Act 1981 which the Board direct be paid to members by way of bonus or rebate based on the business done by him with his Co-operative may be paid partly or wholly in the form of bonus shares or bonus debentures.

7.3. Industrial and Provident Societies

At the end of the year legislation to transfer the administration of this Act from the Department of the Attorney General to that of the Minister of Housing administering the Co-operative Act was introduced into the Parliament.

7.4. Removal of Exemption from Stamp Duties

In his 1981 Budget speech the State Treasurer announced the removal of the exemption from payment of stamp duties on cheques issued by credit unions and building societies. The State Government sees these co-operatives competing directly with the banking system in important respects and believes they should compete on an equal footing.

This is the penalty faced by all co-operatives who lose sight of the essential difference in structure and philosophy of their co-operative business and concentrate all their resources on merely being an efficient business.

8. GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

During the year meetings were held with Ministers of the previous Government and since the election, relevant Ministers in the present Government.

Mr. Brian Dixon, former Minister for Employment and Training attended the 1981 Annual Conference.

Subsequent to the election, briefing meetings have been held between deputations from the Federation and the Minister administering the Co-operation Act, Mr. Ian Cathie as well as the Minister for Employment and Training, Mr. Jim Simmonds.

An on-going relationship exists between staff of the Federation and departmental staff of the Registry of Co-operatives and the Ministry of Employment and Training.

9. COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT CO-OPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

As reported last year, considerable time was spent in discussions with the Premier and the Minister for Employment and Training and departmental officers relating to development of a sound programme to assist the Government's policy of encouraging formation of co-operatives as part of a business oriented approach to employment. The outcome of these discussions was the formal announcement of the Government's Community Employment Co-operative Development Programme.

Groups forming co-operatives as part of a job creation programme must demonstrate a capacity to become self-sufficient business enterprises to qualify for funding assistance under the Programme. The business advisory service for these co-operatives, established at the beginning of the financial year as part of the Federation's involvement in the programme and financed by the Ministry of Employment and Training, has focused a large part of its effort on assisting co-operatives and groups of people interested in forming co-operatives to prepare strategic plans for their futures as co-operatively run small businesses. These overall strategic plans have included a detailed business plan—management structure, marketing strategy and financial budgeting.

At the close of the financial year 19 projects had been funded by the Ministry of which 6 were in the feasibility study stage.

10. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

During the year the Federation organised a meeting for Co-operative Directors with Mr. Paul Mohn Director of the Education Division of the Co-operative Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture. The Executive Officer participated in a seminar for Co-operative Directors organised by the Victorian Dairy Processing Industry Training Committee.

To assist management and Directors, the Federation issued a Management Guidelines publication relating to requirements of the new Co-operation Act so far as year end requirements and organisation of Annual General Meetings are concerned.

At the Regional Meetings held and those planned discussions have taken place and are planned for Co-operatives to indicate their preference on educational programmes to be provided by the Federation.

As indicated above, the Community Co-operative Development Programme provides an education and training unit to assist the training of Co-operatives participating in that programme. During the year the responsibility was undertaken by the Federation in conjunction with the Vocational Orientation Centre. Towards the close of the year full time staff were appointed and the requirements of the Federation in this regard were transferred to the Vocational Orientation Centre.

Representatives from these Co-operatives participated in a national workshop for employment co-operatives held in Canberra and a second one held in Sydney in the early part of the year. A two day residential seminar was held in Ballarat for Victorian Community Employment Co-operatives.

As part of its training programme and also publicity programme the Community Co-operatives arranged for the production of a T.V. Video programme entitled "Up and Running". This Video was broadcast on public television stations in February, 1982 and received wide acclaim. It was produced by our member Co-operative—Open Channel.

11. CO-OPERATIVES AND CO OPERATION IN SCHOOLS

During the year progress has been made in endeavours to implement the Federation's policy relating to the formation of practical co-operatives and the teaching of the subject of co-operation in schools.

A committee comprising representatives from—

Tertiary and Further Education Board
Department of Education
Victorian Institute of Secondary Education
Department of Employment and Training
Co-operative Federation of Victoria

has been formed and has had several meetings with a view to progressing the implementation of this objective.

12. CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF AUSTRALIA

As indicated above membership of this national body continued throughout the year and the agreement for joint operation of secretariat and services continued to the satisfaction of both parties.

Our State representatives on the National Council were Messrs. J.N. Black (with alternate O.J. Slattery) and B.H. Macintosh (with alternate E.J. Long).

The President Mr. Irwin Hunter retired from that office at the end of the current year after 6 years in office. Mr. Hunter also retired from Council on his retirement from service with his participating Co-operative. The Council of the Co-operative Federation of Victoria has extended its appreciation to Mr. Hunter for his outstanding service towards co-operatives both on the national scene and also at the international level. Mr. Hunter participated in many international committees including the Central Committee of the World Body of Co-operatives. The International Co-operative Alliance, the Advisory Council for the Regional Office of the International Co-operative Alliance in South East Asia, Director of the International Co-operative Trading Organisation based in Singapore. Under his guidance the arrangement between the Co-operative Federation of Australia and the Co-operative Federation of Victoria was concluded for the benefit of development of co-operative services in this State.

During the year the Council and a special sub-committee have been mainly concerned with two areas of activity

1. A restructuring of the Co-operative Federation of Australia to allow direct membership of co-operatives.
2. Investigations into the possibility of development of a co-operative banking institution.

13. CONCLUSION

Whilst the above report indicates progress in the operation of your Federation there still remains a large number of Co-operatives outside its membership. Today more than ever there is a great need for Co-operatives to co-operate among themselves, to establish a strong respected co-operative sector in our community, to continue to develop as sound viable locally owned co-operative businesses with board and management fully appreciating and capitalising on the special significance of co-operatives and the essential differences between them and other private profit motivated businesses.

There is a great need to protect and develop the benefits which our predecessors have established. The most effective way to achieve all this is by uniting as Co-operatives in our approaches to Government and the public, to act as Co-operatives and to be seen and recognised as true Co-operatives.

**THE CO-OPERATIVE FEDERATION OF VICTORIA
MEMBERS AS AT 30TH JUNE 1982**

- ✓ - Abalone Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd.,
- ✓ - Australian Footwear Retailers Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Ballarat Employment Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Bendigo Trading Co-operative Ltd.
- Brunswick Italo Australian Employment Co-operative Ltd.
- Brunswick Work Co-operative Ltd.
- Central Gippsland Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Cobden Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Colac Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Community Work Society Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Co-operative Insurance Company of Australia (Victoria) Ltd.
- ✓ - Correct Line Graphics Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Emerald and District Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Frankston Motor Cycle Park Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Gippsland Tip Truck Hiring Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Goulburn Valley Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- Herd Improvement Organisation of Victoria
- ✓ - Hodja Educational Resources Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Ibis Milk Products Ltd.
- Jobaba Co-operative Society Ltd.
- ✓ - Lakes Entrance Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd.
- Loch Ard Producers Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Maryborough Bootstrap Trading Co-operative Ltd.
- Maryborough Energy Research Co-operative Ltd.
- Maryborough Producers and Recycling Co-operative Ltd.
- Mid Murray Producers Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Mitta and Kiewa Valleys Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Morwell Co-operative Ltd.
- Murray Goulburn Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Murrabit Advancement Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - North Eastern Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Northern Herd Development Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Numurkah East Goulburn Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- Open Channel Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Orbost Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Phosphate Co-operative Company of Australia Ltd.
- ✓ - Robinvale Producers Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Rochester Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd.
- San Remo Fishermen's Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Security Land Co-operative Ltd. *PKS*
- ✓ - Security Management Ltd. —
- ✓ - South Gippsland Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- Sybylla Co-operative Press and Publications Ltd.
- ✓ - Terang and District Co-operative Ltd.
- Thorpdale Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Timboon Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- Toora and District Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd.
- Trans National Hauliers Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Upper Murray Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Victorian A.B. Co-operative Ltd.
- Victorian Credit Co-operative Association Ltd.
- Victorian Producers Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Warrandyte Community Workshop Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Warrnambool Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Waverley Trading Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - Western Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- ✓ - West Gippsland Herd Improvement Co-operative Ltd. —
- Yarrawonga and District Rural Co-operative Ltd. —
- Yinnar Artificial Breeders Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Yinnar Community Hotel Co-operative Ltd.
- ✓ - Y.C.W. Co-operative Ltd.

*Goldfields Co-operative
Rochester*

Public Images